

**GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
ABSTRACT**

School Education Department - Filing a defamation suit on the Managing Director, Eenadu Telugu Daily News paper and Others for publishing the adverse, untruthful, unfounded, per se defamatory, derogatory news published into Eenadu Telugu Daily News paper on 23.07.2023 under the caption "Maatallone Madhyahna Bojanam" - Sanction of State Government to launch Prosecution under section 199 (4) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 and to file defamation suit — Accorded - Orders — Issued.

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SCHOOL EDUCATION (PROG.III) DEPARTMENT

G.O.Rt.No.22

Dated:11.01.2024

Read the following:-

1. News Item published in Eenadu News Paper, dated:23.07.2023 under the caption "Maatallone Madhyahna Bojanam".
2. G.O.Rt.No.938, GA(Poll.D) dept., dated:20.02.2007.
3. G.O.Rt.No.2430, GA(I&PR) Dept., dated:30.10.2019.

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ORDER:-

In the reference first read above, a News item was published which are adverse, libellous, untruthful, scandalous, unfounded, per se defamatory, derogatory news, in Eenadu Telugu Daily News paper on 23.07.2023 under the caption "Maatallone Madhyahna Bojanam". which is libelous, scandalous, untruthful, unfounded, per se defamatory, derogatory news.

2. In the false news article, the present Government not done anything new in the Mid-day meal Programme., the programme which has been running for decades, as re-named as Jagananna Gorumudda. and bringing a new menu. The present Government is boasting that changed the menu to make the midday meal tasty, but not increasing the charges of the scheme in accordance with the increased prices. Cooking staff are left with nothing but hardship due to insufficient charges given by the government. Although the prices of essential commodities are increasing, the government is not thinking of increasing the charges. An increase in prices of

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Essential commodities is mandated. The cooking staff are questioning how they will be able to produce if the amount given is not increased in line with the changes in the menu. 37,63,698 lakh students are studying in 44,311 schools across the state. Out of them 30.63 lakhs are those who eat mid-day meal. For this purpose, the central and state governments are giving per student Rs.5.88 for the 1st to 5th and Rs.8.57 per student for classes 6 to 10. Central government 60 % for classes 1-8 and state government bears 40%. 9th, 10th class the state government has been paying for past several years. At present, the amount given by the government is not sufficient due to the increase in the prices of gas, jaggery, tamarind and vegetables. According to the current menu, the cooking staff have been demanding at least Rs.10 per student for providing meals. In the last three years, the price of pulses per kg has increased by Rs.53. In June 2020 Rs.95.65 price now Rs.149 to Rs.165. Gas cylinder price is Rs. 857 has increased to Rs.1,109. As the prices of vegetables are increasing all the time, the cooking workers are facing several difficulties. In a place where there are more than 800 students, cooking for Ragijava its more than burden of cooking workers because cooking for ragijava use the high amount of gas but cooking staff not bare with the increased gas prices, the cooking charges are not enough to meet the expenses.

3. It is further averred that, the government started distribution of Ragi jawa to students in schools in the morning with great fanfare, not a single penny is being given for the preparation. Two Cylinders per month are being used to make Ragijava for 1300 children in the Nehru Municipal Corporation School in Visakapattanam and Rs.3,000 was given to cooks every month and Rs.2200 is being spent on gas. Recently the workers have raised concerns that they are left with only Rs.800, but there is no corresponding response from the government. The present government states that they are implementing the Jagananna Gorumudda Scheme to provide delicious nutrition and accordingly made changes in the menu to provide quality meals to make it palatable. However, the mid-day meal charges are not increasing accordingly.

4. That the news published in Eenadu Telugu Daily Newspaper is factually incorrect, It misleading the truth and leads to misconception in the minds of the public, despite being aware of the

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fact that, the Jagananna Gorumudda scheme is a flagship programme of the government of Andhra Pradesh which is dovetailed with the PM POSHAN scheme of government of India .The Jagananna Gorumudda scheme covered 44,392 Govt. schools total 35,49,730 students from class 1 to 10th in 2022-23.The Programme of Mid-Day-Meal in Schools (MDMS) is a flagship programme of the Government :

Earlier position of the Scheme prior to before 2019

- a) Monotonous menu with only Rice and sambar
- b) Delayed Payments of bills to suppliers and honorarium to CCHs
- c) Honorarium to CCHs was Rs.1,000/- (Central gov Rs.600/- and AP Rs.400/-)
- d) Meagre allocation of budget to the scheme
- e) Cooking cost was not enhanced and no additional cooking cost was given
- f) During 2018-19 , the Cooking cost for Class I to V was Rs.4.35 and for Class VI to VIII is Rs.6.51.
- g) Eggs for five days
- h) No additional nutritive items given to students

Position after May, 2019

The present Government in 2020 reviewed the menu and suggested to provide with more variety and nutritional values so that the vision of scheme to provide a balanced tasty nutritious meal and increase attendance of students is fulfilled and hence the allegations with respect to changing menu is denied in toto., a day wise variety of menu is as follows:

S. No	Day	Menu implemented w.e.f., 20.01.2020
1	Monday	Hot Pongal with boiled egg / Veg. Pulav with Egg Curry and Chikki
2	Tuesday	Tamarind Pulihora with Dondakaya chutney & Boiled Egg
3	Wednesday	Vegetable Rice, Aloo Khurma, Boiled Egg & Chikki

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4	Thursday	Sambarbath/Lemon Rice with Tomato chutney & Boiled Egg
5	Friday	Cooked Rice, Dal with green leaves, Boiled Egg & Chikki
6	Saturday	Green Leafy Veg. Rice (palakura, kothimera, karivepaku, Podina/seasonal green leafy) Pappu Charu & Sweet Pongal

Apart from revising the menu, additionally Egg, Peanut jiggery chikki and Ragijava is being provided on allocated days as mentioned above and Fortified Sortex Rice is supplied to Schools through MDU Vehicles.. During 2023-24, the Budget is in the ratio of (government of India 60% + State 40%. There is steady increase in budget year after year from 2019. The budget for 2023-24(Government of India 60%; Rs.331-37 Cr (+) State Rs.193-42 Cr = Total Rs.524.79 Crores) (In addition to above State 100% is Rs.1164.21 Crores). The total Budget is Rs. 1689 Crores.

The cooking cost in the year 2014 was Rs.3.59 for primary students and Rs 5.38 for Upper Primary and High School. it was revised from 2019 and additional cooking cost is provided from January,2020 At Present was Rs.5.88 for primary students and Rs 8.57 for Upper Primary and High School students. The cooking cost is regularly being paid to the MDM agencies. The cook cum helpers honorarium was Rs.1000/-month until 2018. It was increased to Rs 3000/-from August 2019.

AP Government is providing Ragi Java in additional mean of midday meal to address the anaemia and other related issues in the students under Gorumudda scheme for a healthy mind in healthy body. Ragi Java drink to be given to the students for three (3) days in a week on non-Chikki distribution days i.e., on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Sri Satya Sai Central Trust is providing Ragi flour and Jaggery powder and other logistical arrangements and overhead cost is borne by the State Government.

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5. Further, the newspaper contains several false allegations and statement and is based on wholly erroneous understanding and interpretation of the facts relating to the incident, which has caused enormous prejudice to the Government and affected and damaged the reputation and integrity in the eyes of the public. After considering the above facts, it is evident that a deliberate act to tarnish the image of the Government by publishing false news article which read as whole is per se defamatory in nature, and the same was published without factually ascertaining the truth before publishing the same.

6. Government have examined the matter with reference to the orders issued in the G.Os. 2nd and 3rd read above, wherein powers have been delegated to the Secretaries of respective departments to issue rejoinders, file complaints and lodge appropriate cases, under sub section (4) of section 199 Cr.P.C., if need be, through Public Prosecutor against defamatory news items published telecast/ posted in print/ electronic/ social media pertaining to their respective Departments after following due procedure.

7. In the circumstances reported in the reference 3rd cited, Government after careful examination of the matter and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 199 (4) (b) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, hereby accord sanction to the concerned Public Prosecutor to make a complaint before the competent Court against the following individuals for publishing Defamatory, Derogatory and Venomous news which is devoid of truth published in Eenadu News paper dated.23.07.2023 with the caption "Maatallone Madhyahna Bojanam".

- i. Ushodaya Enterprises Pvt. Ltd,
Represented by it's Managing Director
Survey No.94 B,C&D,
Nidumukkala Village, Tadikonda Mandal,
Guntur District,
Andhra Pradesh – 522 016.
- ii. Mr. Ch. Kiran,
Managing Director,
Eenadu, Road No.36,
Jubille Hills, Hyderabad.

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- iii. Mr. M. Nageshwara Rao
Printer & Publisher,
Eenadu Telugu Daily,
Survey No.239/3, 240/3B & 240/4,
Gudavalli Village,
Vijayawada Rural Mandal,
NTR District,
Andhra Pradesh – 521 104.
- iv. Mr. M. Nageshwara Rao,
Editor, Eenadu Telugu Daily,
Survey No.239/3, 240/3B & 240/4,
Gudavalli Village,
Vijayawada Rural Mandal,
NTR District,
Andhra Pradesh – 521 104
- v. The Bureau Chief,
Eenadu Telugu Daily
Survey No.239/3, 240/3B & 240/4
Gudavalli Village,
Vijayawada Rural Mandal,
NTR District,
Andhra Pradesh – 521 104

8. The State Public Prosecutor, High Court of Andhra Pradesh shall take immediate further action accordingly, in the matter.

(BY ORDER AND IN THE NAME OF THE GOVERNOR OF ANDHRA PRADESH)

PRAVEEN PRAKASH
PRINCIPAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

To

The State Public Prosecutor, High Court of Andhra Pradesh, Nelapadu.

Copy to:

The Director, Mid Day Meal & SS, A.P., Plot No. 129, Nagarjuna Nagar,
Road No.5, Near parinaya kalyana Mandapam, Vijayawada,
Krishna District-520008 .

The PS to Spl. Chief Secretary to C.M

The OSD to Minister for Education

The PS to CS

Law (B) Department

The PS to Prl. Secy (SE)

Sf/Sc.

//FORWARDED:: BY ORDER//


SECTION OFFICER